

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated May 16, 2007. Claims 1 to 5 and 11 to 15 remain in the application, with Claims 6 to 10 and 16 to 20 having been canceled. Claims 1 and 11 are the independent claims. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

The Abstract has been amended to more closely track the current language of independent Claim 1.

Claims 3, 4, 8, 9, 13, 14, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for alleged indefiniteness. In particular, the Office Action asserts that these claims are indefinite for use of the phrase "its extended standard". Without conceding the correctness of this rejection, Claims 3 and 13 have been amended to replace "its extended standard" with "IEEE 1394a-2000 standard", Claims 4 and 14 have been amended to replace "its extended standard" with "USB 2.0 standard", and Claims 8, 9, 18 and 19 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer of subject matter.

Reconsideration and withdrawal of the § 112 rejection are therefore respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 2, 5 to 7, 10 to 12, 15 to 17 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) over U.S. Publication No. 2001/0006400 (Kubo '400). Claims 3 to 4, 8 to 9, 13 to 14 and 18 to 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over Kubo '400 in view of U.S. Publication No. 2001/0012064 (Kubo '064). Reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections are respectfully requested.

Claim 1

The invention of Claim 1 generally concerns a storage apparatus that connects to a removable medium. The storage apparatus includes a first interface unit having a first port, and a second interface unit having a second port. According to one aspect of the invention, the second port is set in a disabled state responsive to access of the removable medium through the first port by a first external apparatus, and the first port is set in a disabled state responsive to access of the removable medium through the second port by a second external apparatus.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to reduce the possibility that two external apparatuses access the removable medium at the same time, which can lead to inconsistent data.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 1 is directed to a storage apparatus that connects to a removable medium. The apparatus includes a first interface unit having a first port, a second interface unit having a second port and a control unit that controls the first port and the second port. The control unit sets the second port in a disabled state responsive to access of the removable medium through the first port by a first external apparatus, and the control unit sets the first port in the disabled state responsive to access of the removable medium through the second port by a second external apparatus.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 1, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of setting a second port in a disabled state responsive to access of a removable medium through a first port by

a first external apparatus, and setting the first port in the disabled state responsive to access of the removable medium through the second port by a second external apparatus.

As understood by Applicant, Kubo '400 is directed a CPU which accesses multiple slots in a digital camera at regular intervals to detect whether first and second memory cards are mounted in first and second slots. If both cards are mounted in the respective slots, the CPU selects one slot for access according to one of three modes - a fixed mode, a priority mode, and a manual operation mode. See Kubo '400, Abstract and paragraph [0054].

Page 5 of the Office Action asserts that Kubo '400 (page 4, paragraph [0058]) discloses setting a second port in a disabled state if a first external apparatus connected to the first port accesses a removable medium, and setting a first port in the disabled state if a second external apparatus connected to the second port accesses the removable medium.

However, the cited portions of Kubo '400 simply disclose the "fixed" operation mode in which one of the two occupied slots is predetermined to be a fixed (default) slot to be accessed at all times. This slot remains as the fixed slot as long as both cards are mounted in the camera. See Kubo '400, paragraph [0058].

Thus, Kubo '400 simply chooses a default slot, rather than disabling a second memory card slot responsive to access of the removable medium through the first memory card slot by a first external apparatus, or disabling a first memory card slot responsive to access of the removable medium through the second memory card slot by a second external apparatus.

Therefore, Kubo '400 is not seen to disclose or suggest setting a second port in a disabled state responsive to access of a removable medium through a first port by a first external apparatus, or setting the first port in the disabled state responsive to access of the removable medium through the second port by a second external apparatus.

Since Kubo '400 is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 1, Kubo '400 is also not seen to disclose or suggest the attendant benefits of such an arrangement, such as reducing the possibility that two apparatuses write to the removable storage medium at the same time.

Kubo '064 has been reviewed and is not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Kubo '400. In particular, the cited portions of Kubo '064 are simply seen to disclose that an external interface can be a USB or IEEE-1394 standard. See Kubo '064, paragraph [0051].

Therefore, independent Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

Claim 11

The invention of Claim 11 also generally concerns a storage apparatus that connects to a removable medium. The storage apparatus includes a first interface unit having a first port, and a second interface unit having a second port. According to one aspect of the invention, the second port is set in a disabled state responsive to a determination that a first external apparatus connected to the first port is capable of accessing the removable medium, and the first port is set in the disabled state responsive to

a determination that a second external apparatus connected to the second port is capable of accessing the removable medium.

By virtue of this arrangement, it is ordinarily possible to reduce the possibility that two external apparatuses even attempt to access the same removable medium at the same time.

Referring specifically to claim language, independent Claim 11 is directed to a storage apparatus that connects to a removable medium. The apparatus includes a first interface unit having a first port, a second interface unit having a second port, a control unit that controls the first port and the second port, and a determination unit that determines whether a first external apparatus is capable of accessing the removable medium through the first port and that determines whether a second external apparatus is capable of accessing the removable medium through the second port. The control unit sets the second port in a disabled state responsive to a determination that a first external apparatus connected to the first port is capable of accessing the removable medium, and the control unit sets the first port in the disabled state responsive to a determination that a second external apparatus connected to the second port is capable of accessing the removable medium.

The applied art is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of the present invention, and in particular is not seen to disclose or suggest at least the features of setting a second port in a disabled state responsive to a determination that a first external apparatus connected to a first port is capable of accessing a removable medium, and setting the first port in the disabled state responsive to a determination that a second external apparatus connected to a second port is capable of accessing the removable medium.

In particular, as discussed above, the cited portions of Kubo '400 simply disclose choosing a default slot, rather than disabling a second memory card slot responsive to access of a removable medium by an first external apparatus through the first memory card slot, or disabling a first memory card slot responsive to access of a removable medium by a second external apparatus through a second memory card slot.

Thus, Kubo '400 is also not seen to disclose or suggest setting a second port in a disabled state responsive to a determination that a first external apparatus connected to a first port is capable of accessing a removable medium, and setting the first port in the disabled state responsive to a determination that a second external apparatus connected to a second port is capable of accessing the removable medium.

Since Kubo '400 is not seen to disclose or suggest the features of Claim 11, Kubo '400 is also not seen to disclose or suggest the attendant benefits of such an arrangement, including reducing the possibility that two apparatuses attempt to write to the removable storage medium at the same time.

Kubo '064 has been reviewed and is not seen to remedy the foregoing deficiencies of Kubo '400.

Therefore, independent Claim 11 is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested.

The other claims in the application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed to be allowable over the applied references for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is deemed to define

an additional aspect of the invention, however, the individual consideration of each on its own merits is respectfully requested.

No other matters being raised, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is courteously solicited.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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